

*SHEPHERD SCHOOL
CHAMBER ORCHESTRA*

LARRY RACHLEFF, music director

CRISTIAN MĂCELARU, conductor

Sunday, October 31, 2010

4:00 p.m.

Stude Concert Hall

Celebrating 1975-2010
35 Years

THE SHEPHERD SCHOOL OF MUSIC RICE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM

Melodien (Melodies)

György Ligeti
(1923-2006)

Points of Departure

Michael Gandolfi
(b. 1956)

Spirale

Strati

Visione

Ritorno

INTERMISSION

Sinfonietta

Francis Poulenc
(1899-1963)

Allegro con fuoco

Molto vivace

Andante cantabile

Finale. Prestissimo et très gai

The reverberative acoustics of Stude Concert Hall magnify the slightest sound made by the audience. Your care and courtesy will be appreciated. The taking of photographs and use of recording equipment are prohibited.

SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

Violin I

Eric Siu,
concertmaster
Derek Powell
Myoung-Ji Jang
Regina Dyches
Ying Fu
Meghan Nenniger

Violin II

Joanna Becker,
principal
Sol Jin
Seth Freeman
Lijia Phang
Kimia Ghaderi
Tara Slough

Viola

Andrew Griffin,
principal
Padua Canty
Alicia Valoti
Jordan Warmath
Tatiana Trono

Cello

Clara Yang,
principal
Caroline Nicolas
Jesse Christeson
Lachezar Kostov

Double Bass

Jonathan Reed,
principal

Double Bass (cont.)

Annabella Leslie
Rosemary Salvucci

Flute

Kathryn Ladner
Maria Popova
Natalie Zeldin

Piccolo

Kathryn Ladner

Oboe

Erica Overmyer
Michelle Pan
Emily Snyder

Oboe d'Amore

Michael McGowan

Clarinet

Erika Cikraji
Daniel Goldman
Jared Hawkins
LeTriel White
Micah Wright

Bassoon

Kevin Judge
Michael Matushek

Horn

Katharine Caliendo
Rebekah Daley
Tyler Holt
John Turman
Alena Zidlicky

Trumpet

Jeffrey Northman
Douglas Surber

Trombone

Samuel Jackson

Tuba

Austin Howle

Harp

Meghan Caulkett

Piano and Celeste

Aya Yamamoto

Timpani

Ethan Ahmad
Lonnie Dobbs

Percussion

Lonnie Dobbs
Aaron Guillory
Robert McCullagh

Orchestra Manager and Librarian

Kaaren Fleisher

Production Manager

Mandy Billings

Assistant Production Manager

Ryan Retartha
Francis Schmidt

STRING SEATING CHANGES WITH EACH CONCERT.

WINDS, BRASS AND PERCUSSION LISTED ALPHABETICALLY.

PROGRAM NOTES

Melodien György Ligeti

With the 1971 composition of **Melodien** (*Melodies*), György Ligeti embarked on a new phase in his compositional career. Ligeti's previous works had been aligned with the post-World War II European avant garde, culminating in micropolyphonic compositions such as the famous **Atmosphères**. These pieces consisted of long, dissonant chords and tone clusters that gradually changed and shifted, drifting into and out of focus. The otherworldly effects that these techniques created in **Atmosphères** made it a natural for inclusion in Stanley Kubrick's film **2001: A Space Odyssey**.

Melodien was written on commission from the city of Nuremberg in celebration of the quinqucentenary of the birth of Hungarian-born German artist Albrecht Dürer. Ligeti, who was himself Hungarian by birth but living in Germany on a scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service, was selected for the commission because of the parallels between his and Dürer's lives. This piece marked Ligeti's return to pure melody as the source material for his works. Unlike the earlier Neoclassicists, who sought to bring about a Renaissance of formal melody and harmony, Ligeti's return to melody was subtler and more entrenched in the musical vocabulary of the late twentieth-century avant garde. The orchestra in **Melodien** is divided into three strata: the melodic foreground, a middle-ground consisting of ostinato figures marked "corrente" ("running"), and a harmonic background of sustained tones. Though the melodies are ostensibly the focus of this composition, much of the music's true interest lies in the composer's exploration of the world between background and foreground, and the interaction between the three strata of the composition.

Although there are a few moments during the piece when a complete melody can be heard above the orchestra's polyphonic mass, the majority of the lines in the piece's foreground are only fragments of melodies, interacting to create what Ligeti referred to as the "ornamental aspect" of his piece. **Melodien** is arranged into four loose formal sections, distinguished by progressions of "focus chords," moments in which the different instrumental lines coalesce into a distinct chord. These slowly clarified "focus chords" reveal the piece's main attribute – an attention to the dissipation of energy rather than the climactic build-up customary in pre-Modern music. The piece begins with an energetic ascent into the treble range through a series of quick, repeated scales, followed by a section of mysterious solos that give the piece the "creeper-like" feeling that Ligeti said he intended to evoke. These morph into a diverse contrapuntal section, followed by a pseudo-recapitulation of the first section and ending on a held dissonance in the violin that slowly dissolves into silence.

– Note by Briana Lehman

Points of Departure Michael Gandolfi

Points of Departure was commissioned jointly by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra, and the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. It was premiered by the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra at Carnegie Hall on November 19, 1988.

At the time I received the commission, I was preoccupied with two subjects: the nature of multi-movement form and the plurality of opinions implied by a given idea. As a piece is being composed, one typically encounters critical junctures where two (or perhaps more) alternatives seem equally well-suited. **Points of Departure** explores these alternatives.

Each movement of **Points of Departure** begins with the literal repeat of a section from the previous movement but moves in a radically different direction than its progenitor. It follows that each new movement creates a departure point from which the next movement will begin. The last movement must create the departure point that initiated the first movement in order to close the form.

In most of my previous works, I abstained from using multi-movement forms and forms with sectional repetition, because such designs impede the forward motion of my harmonic language. In this piece the departure points require the repetition of material, presenting the problem of maintaining harmonic growth within the framework of the form. In placing the repeated section at the beginning of a new movement (rather than within a movement), I was free to allow the harmony to spin out continually throughout the piece.

The subtitle for each movement is descriptive of the surface features of the music: "Spirale" – a descending harmonic sequence which is composed as a series of musical spirals; "Strati" – a network of coloristic layers; "Visione" – a vision or dream; and "Ritorno" – the eventual return of the opening spiral.

– Note by the composer

Sinfonietta Francis Poulenc

Before and during World War I, a gradual consciousness of the music of the past was arising in Europe. Though today it is not unusual to attend concerts of music written three or even more centuries ago, art music concerts of the nineteenth century rarely consisted of anything written more than seventy years prior. This began to change toward the end of the century, centering on a movement in Paris. Within the city, schools of early music performance and musicology were established, prompting the publication of large bodies of early compositions and an interest in such works by contemporary composers. From this arose the movement of Neoclassicism, a full-on musical revolution that emerged between the world wars in Paris. The movement was electrified by Stravinsky's ballet **Pulcinella**, which combined music attributed to Giovanni Battista Pergolesi with modern harmonies and instrumentation. The style was rapidly embraced by Parisian composers who resented the overly emotional and sentimental tradition of German Romantics like Richard Wagner, and who were enticed by a musical aesthetic based on clarity and stability, with some of the trimmings of new music. Thus evolved a host of composers inspired by and imitating the music of the past while adding their own unique and entirely twentieth-century twists.

Francis Poulenc was one such composer. Though he was trained in piano from a young age, Poulenc bypassed a musical education from the Paris Conservatoire at the prompting of his father, who encouraged him to pursue a more utilitarian career. Nevertheless, Poulenc studied composition privately and was drawn into the circle of composers known as "Les Six" ("The Six"), setting his career as a composer into motion.

The *Sinfonietta*, one of Poulenc's few orchestral works, was written in 1947 on a commission from the BBC, and is typical of the composer's style. As its diminutive name suggests, the piece is characterized by lightness, wit, and clarity, cornerstones of the Neoclassical ideal. Firmly ensconced in this aesthetic, the *Sinfonietta* is a study in Classical form, consisting of a slow movement sandwiched in between faster movements. The light and scalar melodies of the piece speak to Poulenc's inclination toward Classicism, while his frequent use of non-chordal harmony affirms his placement in the twentieth century. The first movement, *Allegro con fuoco*, is not itself symphonic in form, instead consisting of a series of light-hearted themes that evolve and recur seemingly on a whim. The ubiquitous Classical-era sonata form is referenced at the end of the movement with a false recapitulation of a fragment of the first theme. The second movement, *Molto vivace*, is a witty scherzo based on three motifs introduced by the strings and passed around the orchestra. The slow movement, *Andante cantabile*, introduces lyrical themes in the winds, recalling the flowing lines of Romantic symphonies. The finale, marked *Prestissimo et très gai*, is based on material from one of Poulenc's failed string quartets. These themes are at home in this symphonic work, leading the piece to a raucous conclusion.

– Note by Briana Lehman

UPCOMING ORCHESTRA EVENTS

November 3, 5, 7 and 9 – SHEPHERD SCHOOL OPERA and members of the SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA present *L'incoronazione di Poppea* by Claudio Monteverdi; Richard Bado, conductor; Debra Dickinson, director. Wortham Opera Theatre at the Shepherd School. Sunday's performance at 2:00 p.m.; all other performances at 7:30 p.m. Admission (general seating): \$12; students and senior citizens \$10. For tickets call 713-348-8000.

Saturday, Nov. 6, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Smetana - *Overture to "The Bartered Bride"*; Tchaikovsky - *Violin Concerto in D Major, Op. 35* (Luke Hsu, soloist; Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Strauss - *Also Sprach Zarathustra, Op. 30*. Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Thursday, Dec. 2, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Mendelssohn - *The Hebrides, Op. 26 (Fingal's Cave)*; Ravel - *Ma Mère l'Oye (Mother Goose): 5 pièces enfantines* (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Tchaikovsky - *Serenade for Strings in C Major, Op. 48*. Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.

Friday, Dec. 3, 8:00 p.m. – SHEPHERD SCHOOL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Larry Rachleff, conductor PROGRAM: Wagner - *Prelude to Act III of "Lohengrin"*; Stravinsky - *Symphony in C* (Cristian Măcelaru, conductor); and Brahms - *Piano Concerto No. 2 in B-flat Major, Op. 83* (Jon Kimura Parker, soloist). Stude Concert Hall. Free admission.



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